

Delaware middle school students enjoy hands-on renewable energy experience with DNREC-sponsored Junior Solar Sprint

HARRINGTON – Gauger-Cobbs Middle School of Newark and W.T. Chipman Middle School of Harrington claimed the checkered flag today as 24 teams of middle school students from 14 schools across the state vied for honors in the Junior Solar Sprint, a competition in which students build and race solar-powered model cars. DNREC's Division of Energy & Climate teamed up with the Delaware Technology Student Association to organize this year's event at the Delaware State Fairgrounds.

Over the past few months, students worked with classmates and teacher advisors to build model cars powered by solar photovoltaic cells, or solar panels. Today, their work paid off as racers competed for top speed in time trials, as well as for awards in engineering design and creative design. And in the process of putting their cars into the Junior Solar Sprint competition they also got a better grasp of what solar technology can mean for their future.

"Solar technology allows us to harness the sun's abundant energy for a clean, lasting power source," said DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin. "Junior Solar Sprint challenges students to think about ways solar energy plays a larger role in our lives by providing electricity for our everyday energy needs. Delaware has over 4,000 solar energy systems across the state, powering homes, houses of worship, public buildings, farms and businesses. Solar and other forms of clean energy enable Delawareans to achieve a better quality of life by

reducing greenhouse gas emissions and helping protect our environment.”

The Junior Solar Sprint competition is part of a national program sponsored by the U.S. Army Educational Outreach Program. It encourages students to engage in problem-solving, teamwork, and creative scientific thinking to solve environmental challenges. DNREC has participated in Junior Solar Sprint for more than 20 years. This year’s event was in conjunction with the Delaware Technology Student Association 2017 State Conference, which drew several hundred students to compete in various science and technology challenges.

Participating schools in this year’s Junior Solar Sprint were MOT Charter Middle School, Middletown; Fred Fifer Middle School, Camden; W.T. Chipman Middle School, Harrington; Providence Creek Academy, Clayton; Cab Calloway School of the Arts, Wilmington; P.S. duPont Middle School, Wilmington; Holy Cross School, Dover; Sanford School, Hockessin; Springer Middle School, Wilmington; Postlethwait Middle School, Camden; Beacon Middle School, Lewes; Gauger-Cobbs Middle School, Newark; H.B. DuPont Middle School, Hockessin, and Alfred G. Waters Middle School, Middletown.

2017 Junior Solar Sprint Competition results

All-around winners for combined speed, design, and presentation:

- 1st place: Gauger-Cobbs Middle School, Car #2
- 2nd place: Springer Middle School, Car #7
- 3rd place: W.T. Chipman Middle School, Car #14

Top five teams in time-trial races:

- 1st place: Gauger-Cobbs Middle School, Car #3
- 2nd place: Springer Middle School, Car #7
- 3rd place: Springer Middle School, Car #8
- 4th place: W.T. Chipman Middle School, Car #15

- 5th place: W.T. Chipman Middle School, Car #14

Top five teams in creative design:

- 1st place: W.T. Chipman Middle School, Car #14
- 2nd place: Springer Middle School, Car #8
- 3rd place: Sanford School, Car #19
- 4th place: Holy Cross Middle School, Car #21
- 5th place: Cab Calloway School of the Arts, Car #11

For more information on renewable energy programs administered by the Delaware Division of Energy & Climate, please visit [the Division of Energy & Climate website](#). For a close-up of the Junior Solar Sprint competition, please view [a video on DNREC's Facebook page](#).

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